

of page 1 as follows:

A1 **-- BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION --.**

\ Rewrite the paragraph beginning at line 7 of page 1
as follows:

-- In recent years attempts have also been made to produce the soundboards of acoustic musical instruments in composite fibre material construction. Structures of A2 composite fibre material construction generally consist of elongate fibres which are preferably oriented in certain directions and a carrier or matrix material which is generally a thermosetting or thermoplastic plastics material. In the preferred embodiment of the invention this is an epoxy resin system.

\ Insert the following heading between lines 2 and 3
of page 2 as follows:

A3 **-- SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION --.**

Rewrite the paragraph beginning at line 7 of page 2
as follows:

-- Composite fibre sandwich structures are basically constructed in such a way that a core plate of low density is provided on both sides with composite fibre laminate layers. In this case the bending strength of the structure is heavily dependent upon the thickness of the core plate. Core plates of composite fibre sandwich constructions are frequently produced from hard foam materials. Balsa wood is used for the preferred embodiment of the invention. The fibre laminate can be produced by means of layered fibre structures, fibre meshes, hand lay-up laminated individual rovings or the like,

as prepreg or by means of a suitable manufacturing process.

A4 Layered fibre structures in the form of prepgs are preferably used in the construction according to the invention. These are preferably single-layer and at the same time multidirectional. --

\ Rewrite the paragraph beginning at line 23 of page 3 as follows:

A5 -- Some embodiments of the invention are explained in greater detail below with reference to the drawings. --

\ Insert the following heading before line 1 of page 4 as follows:

A6 -- **THE DRAWINGS** --.

\ Insert the following heading between lines 5 and 6 of page 4 as follows:

A7 -- **DETAILED DESCRIPTION** --.

\ Rewrite the paragraph beginning at line 6 of page 4 as follows:

A8 -- According to the invention the core plate 1 has recesses 3 in the core plate material in at least one zone, but preferably in a plurality of zones at which the soundboard in the installed state is subjected to low bending stresses. These zones preferably lie in regions of strong antinodes of the soundboard, since there a reduction in the vibrating mass has a particularly positive effect in the sense of increasing the vibrating speed (velocity) and thus the sound radiation. In some areas of minimal static load the core plate recess 3 extends through the entire thickness of the core plate, as is shown in the embodiments in Figures 1a, 1e to 1i. As a result

the fibre laminate 2 acts in these areas - apart from the desired mass reduction - in a similar manner, regarded dynamically, to a vibrating membrane, the area of which corresponds to the area of the recess. In this case, as can be seen in Figures 1e and 1f, the lower fibre laminate 2b is preferably connected via the edges of the recess 3k to the upper fibre laminate 2a. -

A8

Rewrite the paragraph beginning at line 17 of page 4
as follows:

-- The fibre laminate 2 is preferably additionally coated with a thin layer 5, which can again preferably be a layer of solid wood. Figures 1f and 1g show these variants of Figures 1e and 1a. In addition to the visual benefits of this embodiment there is also the advantage that the solid wood layer 5 acts jointly with the fibre laminate 2 as a membrane in some variants, as shown in Figures 1f, 1g and 1i.

Rewrite the paragraph beginning at line 22 of page 4
and bridging page 5 as follows:

-- In those areas of the soundboard which are subjected to higher static stresses and in which therefore a reduction of the bending strength of the soundboard must be dispensed with, the core plate recesses 3 do not extend through the entire thickness D of the core plate but has a depth less than the core plate. This is shown in Figures 1b to 1d, and in this case the core plate is preferably made up of various layers 4. When the recess is positioned in the centre of the cross-section of the core plate 1 (Figure 1b) the core plate 1 is made up of three layers 4a to 4c, and when

A8 the recess is positioned on one side of the cross-section (Figures 1c and 1d) the core plate is made up of two layers 4a and 4b.

Rewrite the paragraph beginning at line 12 of page 5 as follows:

A9 -- These extreme cases (of a recess volume which is greater than the volume of the core material) which are illustrated in Figures 1h and 1i are, however, preferably restricted to a few localised areas. Considered overall, the total volume of all recesses 3 amounting at most to 80%, preferably between 20 and 45% is markedly less than the total volume of the core plate filled with material (At 100% the total volume of al recesses would be identical to the total volume of the remaining core material).

Rewrite the paragraph beginning at line 18 of page 5 as follows:

For decoupling of the soundboard, for instance in the region of the edge, it is advantageous to reduce the thickness of the core plate. Therefore the core plate preferably has a localised difference in thickness.

Cancel claims 1-5.

Add the following claims:

A10 6. A soundboard for use in an acoustic musical instrument, said soundboard comprising a low density core plate having two opposite faces, and a fibre laminate overlying and adhered at least to one of said faces, said fibre laminate having elongate fibres embedded in a carrier, said core plate having at least one recess wholly within the